



Commonwealth of Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet

Steven L. Beshear, Governor

Leonard K. Peters, Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Allison Fleck, 502-564-3410

Drinking Water Week Reminds Us to Conserve Water *Division of Water encourages wise use of limited resource*

FRANKFORT, Ky. (May 8, 2012) – The Kentucky Division of Water encourages Kentuckians during National Drinking Water Week, May 6-12, to practice water conservation every day of the year.

Water is a crucial natural resource. Without water, there would be no life on Earth. Water also affects our health, lifestyle and economic well being. Consider just a few of the many ways we use water – sanitation and hygiene, food preparation, recreation, industry and agriculture, transportation, energy production, sewage treatment, and many more.

Water covers about 75 percent of our planet, so it appears plentiful. However, 97 percent of that water is salty ocean water, which we cannot drink. Of the three percent that is fresh water, most is frozen in glaciers and polar ice caps. As a result, only 1 percent of the Earth's water may be available for drinking.

Moreover, the Earth's water supply is fixed: no new water is being made. The existing water supply is continuously recycled. Although the recycling process cleans water naturally, water can become contaminated -- by microorganisms, metals, salts, chemicals, medical waste and other substances -- and can thus become unsafe for human use.

Preventing water pollution and conserving water will help to ensure an adequate supply of usable water for ourselves and for future generations. Using water wisely helps to protect the quantity and quality of our water resources.

Wise water use can also help people save money on water, sewer and energy bills. It helps to reduce the demand on water treatment and wastewater facilities and to reduce the amount of waste put into rivers and streams.

Here are some simple ways to reduce the amount of water you consume:

Save Water Inside the Home

- Replace old toilets with high-efficiency models.
- Replace old washing machines with models that use half as much water.
- Check for leaks in toilets and pipes.
- Run full loads in clothing and dishwashing machines.
- Keep drinking water cooling in the refrigerator.
- Plug the bathroom sink while shaving and reuse water.
- Turn off water while brushing teeth until ready to rinse.
- Replace old showerheads with high-efficiency models that reduce flow from six gallons per minute to less than three gallons per minute.
- Install aerators on all faucets to reduce flow by 50 percent.

Save Water Outside the Home

- Mulch bushes and trees to retain moisture.
- Raise the mower blade to three inches to encourage root growth for holding soil moisture.
- Apply fertilizers with slow-release water-insoluble forms of nitrogen.
- Check for hose and nozzle leaks.
- Use a broom rather than hosed water to clean debris from driveways and sidewalks.
- Wash the car on the lawn to allow for natural filtering of detergents through soil.
- Recycle rainwater with barrels and buckets for re-use to water plants.
- Water early or late when temperatures are low to reduce evaporation.
- Water deeply to reach roots.
- Plant native and drought-tolerant plants to reduce the need to water.

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